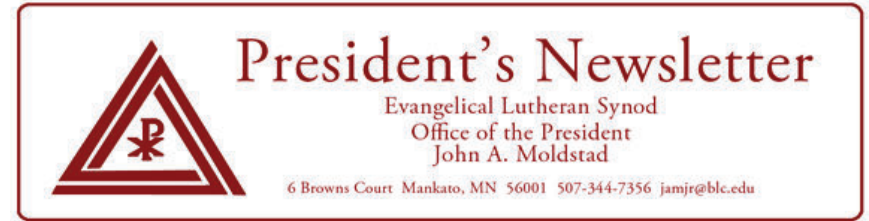


## President's schedule

January 3 - Centennial Committee  
January 14 - Planning and Coordinating Committee  
January 15 - Board for Youth Outreach  
January 25-26 - Engage Others With Jesus retreat in Orlando, FL  
January 27 - Preach at Grace Lutheran, Vero Beach, FL  
January 28-30- Board for Home Outreach seminar in Orlando, FL  
February 8-9 - Engage Others With Jesus retreat in Madison, WI  
February 9 - ELS Historical Society  
February 11-12 - Board of Regents  
February 12 - Board of Trustees  
February 15 - ELS presentation at Martin Luther College



**January 2013**

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ's Kingdom:

A former professor of mine used to say, "If you think the biggest barrier to Christianity is the subject of evolution vs. creation, you are mistaken. The issue for the skeptics is the theodicy question – If God, why evil?" The Newtown, CT, school shootings have posed this age-old question once again in the minds of many.

The Christmas/Epiphany accounts make us aware of a stark reality. God had the newborn Christ-child appear on the scene even while a brutally wicked king slaughtered many innocent children. What a reminder for us all. Right in the middle of a very evil world we, nevertheless, are made to see the invaluable gift of God's grace! Do we view this new calendar year as another chance to engage people lovingly even on this challenging topic of evil? We have THE message to share. Oh, we don't have all the answers to the why question. But we do have pertinent information from God himself in his revealed Word.

The cause of wickedness is never to be laid at the doorstep of our Maker. James writes, "When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed" (James 1:13, 14). No, sin is always the fault of sinful humans who have been thoroughly infected with evil once our first parents succumbed to the Prince of Darkness - a created spirit-being who first used his free will to go against the Almighty. We humans then caved-in to sin and faced a devastating predicament. As with Satan and his evil angels, mankind is so steeped and bound in sin that it takes outward DIVINE rescue efforts to turn us – any of us – around from heading to eternal destruction. But for fallen humanity – for us and for all – there is hope! This is why Christ has come. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:17). Here is THE message we are eager to share! The God-Man entered our world to do what we could not – flawlessly fulfilling God's law in our place and then dying and rising again as the substitute payment for every sin and all wickedness. Through faith in the Savior we have forgiveness and eternal life!

Many who pursue wicked ways do not repent and believe the good news. But this does not take away from a reliable fact of history: God's Son truly died for their sins also ("He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2)). . . See why only THIS message is a heart-changer? . . . Will this year be a telling one?

May God grant you a blessed 2013 in the grace of the holy Christ-child,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "John A. Moldstad". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'J'.

John A. Moldstad

### Response to the Newtown tragedy

If you have not done so already, we invite synod members and friends to read the following article by Rev. Paul Fries: <http://www.evangelicallutheransynod.org/the-problem/>

### First mission offering

Our newest exploratory home mission in the Austin, Texas, area recently sent a check of \$412 to the synod. The members wrote in an accompanying card: "Thank you and Merry Christmas from Hope Lutheran Church. Please find enclosed our first ever offering check to the ELS. Also here is a photo of some of the congregation and Pastor Kerkow holding the check. We hope it will be the first of many! The ELS has been so supportive of our mission, and we are thrilled to be able to start 'giving back' so that other new missions can be started for the Lord's Kingdom. May the Lord continue to bless the work of the ELS! In Christ, our Newborn King, Hope Lutheran Church, Cedar Park/Leander, TX."



### Christ the King Lutheran Church

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Green Bay, WI, celebrated its 20th anniversary on December 16, 2012. The Sunday School children graced the special worship service with their voices. President Moldstad was the guest preacher for the occasion. On December 17, 1992, Pastor Leonard Buelow, who had announced his LCMS retirement one month earlier,



helped a dedicated group of Lutherans found Christ the King on the northwest side of Green Bay. At the anniversary celebration dinner, much gratitude was expressed for the faithful and skilled efforts of "Builders



for Christ (WELS)" who took only two months to erect the wonderful sanctuary at 1700 Cardinal in Howard. Besides having the pastoral services of Rev. Buelow, the congregation since January 9, 2011, also is blessed with Rev. Dan Hartwig as the Assistant Pastor.

### World Outreach

**Chile:** Chelsea Dietsche reports from her English program in Linares, Chile, that ELS donors have provided funds for scholarships for her students. The English program is drawing potential members toward our congregation. A video about her work may be viewed online and may be used at Bible study classes, youth gatherings, etc.: [www.evangelicallutheransynod.org/cross-stitch/](http://www.evangelicallutheransynod.org/cross-stitch/)

**Korea:** Seminary student Kyun Young Chung is beginning his vicarage in Seoul, Korea, after receiving training at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary in Mankato, Minnesota and through the WELS Pastoral Studies Institute.

### Evergreen Lutheran High School

Rev. Tony Pittenger from Port Orchard, WA, has passed along this good news: "Our area Lutheran high school in Washington reached a milestone day on December 18, 2012. After



35 years of renting and borrowing, of making due with condemned buildings and portables, holding classes in gymnasiums and stages; Evergreen Lutheran High School has a home of its own! The school board signed papers to purchase a high school in Tacoma, Washington, and move-in will take place next July. The writer of Psalm 66:1-2 captures this moment well with these words: 'Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise!' If you want to learn more on this, go to: <http://bit.ly/TsfVU1>

### Lutheran Sentinel

The Lutheran Sentinel will be published bimonthly beginning in 2013. The issues will be: January-February, March-April, May-June, July-August, September-October and November-December. Also, beginning January 1st, subscriptions should be sent to: Lutheran Sentinel 6 Browns Ct. Mankato, MN 56001.

### Email Updates and Devotions

Anyone interested can sign up to receive the President's Newsletter and Daily Devotions via email on the ELS website: [www.els.name](http://www.els.name).

### Facebook and Twitter

If you have a Facebook or Twitter account, receive updates on happenings around our synod several times per week. Click on the Facebook or Twitter icons on the ELS website ([www.els.name](http://www.els.name)) to follow our synod!

### Informal Meeting

Fifteen leaders from the LCMS, WELS and ELS met for informal dialogue on December 4-7, 2012. The group consisted of seven men from the WELS, seven from the LCMS, and Pres. Moldstad as the sole representative from the ELS. While none of the participants anticipate impending formal doctrinal discussions toward fellowship, the meetings were viewed as helpful in dispelling certain caricatures, learning of challenges faced by each synod, and taking a look at what currently unites/divides the church bodies of the former Synodical Conference in their respective efforts to pursue confessional Lutheranism. A similar meeting is planned for 2013.